

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 NSC-05 INR-07 CIAE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 SP-02 L-03 H-02 /051 R

DRAFTED BY:EUR/SE:HEKIRBY:VSS

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O R 261518Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION NATO

SECDEF

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 046625

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (SPECAT CAPTION DELETED)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:MARR, MASS, TU

SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR TURKEY

1. TURKISH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL CALLED ON UNDERSECRETARY
SISCO ON INSTRUCTIONS FEBRUARY 24 TO REQUEST THE ADMINIS-
TRATION TO MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES TO RESTORE GRANT ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY IN
THE FY 76 ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION, AND TO REMOVE CERTAIN
NEW RESTRICTIONS ON TURKISH AID APPEARING IN THE BILL WHICH
WAS REPORTED TO THE FULL HOUSE BY HIRC LAST WEEK. ESENBEL
SAID THE GOT FEELS THAT CONDITIONS FOR A NEW US-TURKISH
DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WILL NOT HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED UNTIL
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GRANT AID IS RESTORED AND THE REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON

ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY REMOVED.

2. IN REFERRING TO THE HIRC BILL, ESENBEL SAID THAT WHILE IT APPEARS SUPERFICIALLY TO BE A STEP FORWARD IN THAT IT PERMITS THE CONTINUATION OF COMMERCIAL SALES AND UP TO \$125 MILLION IN FMS CASH AND/OR CREDIT SALES, IN EFFECT THE BILL'S OVERLAPPING RESTRICTIONS WORK IN SUCH A WAY AS TO LIMIT OVERALL TURKISH PURCHASES TO FAR LESS THAN WHAT IS NECESSARY TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF TURKEY'S ARMED FORCES. HE REFERRED PARTICULARLY TO THAT CLAUSE IN THE BILL STIPULATING THAT EACH SALE OF SIGNIFICANT MILITARY

EQUIPMENT TO ANY COUNTRY IN EXCESS OF \$25 MILLION WOULD BE HANDLED AS AN FMS TRANSACTION RATHER THAN THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS. HE SAID THIS CLAUSE, TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE \$12; MILLION CEILING ON FMS CASH AND CREDIT SALES FOR TURKEY EFFECTIVELY MEANS THAT FROM NOW THROUGH THE TRANSITIONAL QUARTER TURKEY WOULD BE PERMITTED TO PURCHASE A MAXIMUM OF \$125 MILLION WORTH OF SIGNIFICANT MILITARY EQUIPMENT. HE SAID THAT THE GOT HOPES THAT AT A MINIMUM FMS CASH SALES CAN BE REMOVED FROM THE \$125 MILLION CEILING.

3. ESENBEL ALSO TOOK EXCEPTION TO A CLAUSE IN THE HIRC BILL REQUIRING THE PRESIDENT TO INFORM CONGRESS OF HIS INTENTION TO MAKE ANY FMS SALE TO TURKEY, REGARDLESS OF VALUE, 30 DAYS BEFORE CONSUMMATING THE TRANSACTION -- A RESTRICTION THAT APPLIES ONLY TO TURKEY. HE ALSO ASKED THAT WE TRY TO REMOVE THE PHRASE WHICH WOULD MAKE THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO CONCLUDE FMS TRANSACTIONS CONTINGENT UPON TURKEY'S NOT INCREASING THE TURKISH CIVILIAN POPULATION ON CYPRUS.

4. SISCO REPLIED THAT WHILE THE HIRC BILL IS NOT BY ANY MEANS ALL THAT WE OR TURKEY MIGHT HAVE HOPED FOR, IT DOES REPRESENT A VERY SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD SINCE IT WOULD RESTORE CREDIT ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY. SISCO SAID HE HOPED THAT ESENBEL WAS EMPHASIZING THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION IN HIS REPORTS TO THE GOT. THE UNDER-SECRETARY SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WILL WORK DISCREETLY TO CONFIDENTIAL

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TRY TO REMOVE THE CEILING ON FMS CASH SALES AND TO ELIMINATE OR MODIFY SOME OF THE NEW LANGUAGE RELATING TO TURKEY WHICH ESENBEL HAD MENTIONED. HE NOTED THAT IT IS OUR FRANK ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL BE HARD TO PERSUADE THE HOUSE AND THE SENATE TO IMPROVE ON THEIR RESPECTIVE BILLS AT THIS TIME BUT THAT WE WILL CERTAINLY TRY. SISCO SAID, HOWEVER, THAT WE WOULD WANT TO DO THIS IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO PROVOKE A MAJOR CONFRONTATION WITH CONGRESS LEST

WE LOSE SOME OF THE POSITIVE FEATURES OF THE LEGISLATION NOW PROPOSED AND PREJUDICE OUR CHANCES OF GETTING SUBSEQUENT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE ASSISTANCE ARTICLES OF THE DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT WE ARE NEGOTIATING. SINCE IT IS OUR FIRM BELIEF THAT THERE IS NO CHANCE WHATSOEVER OF GETTING CONGRESSIONAL AGREEMENT TO RESUME GRANT ASSISTANCE AT THIS TIME, WE THINK IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO MAKE A MAJOR VISIBLE EFFORT IN THIS REGARD, THE UNDERSECRETARY ADDED. SISCO EMPHASIZED THAT ONCE WE AND THE TURKS HAVE CONCLUDED NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT, WE SHALL PUT IT SQUARELY TO THE CONGRESS AND LET THE LATTER EITHER ENDORSE THE ASSISTANCE PROVISIONS, WHICH WOULD ENTAIL THE REMOVAL OF REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY, OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE US-TURKISH SECURITY RELATIONSHIP OF FAILURE TO DO SO.

5. IN REPLY TO ESENBEL'S COMMENT THAT THE GOT WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN THAT THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT CURRENTLY PLAN A MAJOR FLOOR FIGHT IN SUPPORT OF GRANT ASSISTANCE, SISCO SAID HE HOPED THE GOT WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT WE SHALL HAVE TO BE THE JUDGE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CURRENT TACTICAL SITUATION WITH CONGRESS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE046625
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EUR/SE:HEKIRBY:VSS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760073-0693
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976028/aaaaagtq.tel
Line Count: 140
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <15 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR TURKEY
TAGS: MARR, MASS, TU, US
To: ANKARA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006